

WORKFORCE ADVISORY



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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TO: ESD Career Development Specialists

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SUBJECT: Clarification of the Provision of WIA Services to Spouses of Military Members and TEGL #22-04 Change 1

The purpose of this Workforce Advisory is to disseminate U.S. Department of Labor (US DOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA), Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 22-04, Change 1. This document clarifies US DOL policy regarding existing flexibility under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and encourages the workforce system to serve military spouses as dislocated workers under the WIA Dislocated Worker Program.

Military spouses experience frequent and often very significant education and career interruptions due to service members' assignments to new duty stations. The workforce investment system is uniquely positioned to leverage the full array of its resources, particularly WIA Dislocated Worker formula funding, to implement innovative education, retraining, and reemployment strategies to ensure that military spouses have full access to the resources necessary for their career stability and advancement.

As outlined in TEGL No. 22-04, a military spouse who leaves his/her job to follow his/her spouse to a new duty assignment can be served with WIA Dislocated Worker formula grant funds in certain circumstances. When the spouse is unable to continue an employment relationship due to the service member's permanent change of military station, or the military spouse loses employment as a result of the spouse's discharge from the military, then the cessation of employment can be considered to meet the termination component of the WIA definition of dislocated worker. This policy guidance further clarifies that the spouse's cessation of employment, due to the service member's permanent change of military station or his/her discharge from the

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military, can also be considered to meet the "unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation" criterion of the WIA definition of dislocated worker.

In the majority of cases, the circumstances in which military spouses are required to leave a job/occupation as a result of the military member's transfer do not position the spouse to return immediately to his/her previous occupation or industry, particularly at the same level for the following reasons:

- Spouses are generally not resuming employment with the same employer. Even if a spouse resumes employment with the same employer, the employment is in a new location, and occupations/jobs will generally not be the same structurally or organizationally as in the prior location.
- When military spouses do get jobs in their new locations, it is likely, as new employees that they will start at lower levels of seniority than the levels of their positions in their prior locations.
- There is frequently a gap in employment as spouses make the move and search for new employment, which may lessen their likelihood of returning to the same level of occupation or type of job.

Based on the above it is reasonable for case managers to conclude that in the vast majority of cases, military spouses impacted by a service member's duty reassignment or discharge will meet the "unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation" criterion of WIA and could thus be served as dislocated workers.

Case Managers are strongly encouraged to review TEGL #22-04, Change 1 and take full advantage of the flexibility provided under the dislocated worker definition to engage and serve military spouses in need of education, training, and career assistance. TEGL No. 22-04, Change 1 can be found at:
<http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL/TEGL22-04c1acc.pdf>

Any questions regarding this Workforce Advisory should be directed to: Michael Lohmann, Program Lead, Division of Business Partnerships, at 907-269-4655 (phone), 907-269-4661 (fax), or mike.lohmann@alaska.gov (email).